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*see also memo  
to DDI, same  
subject*

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

23 June 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN TURKEY

*Staff  
memo  
33.60*

1. The new Turkish regime appears to be firmly in control of the country and there are no significant indications of popular opposition to its rule. At the outset it believed that it could restore civil government almost immediately and hold national elections within three months. It has now shed these illusions and has settled down to the task of running the country in an energetic, if inexperienced, manner. The provisional government is controlled by the National Unity Committee (NUC) which staged the coup and now acts as the country's "legislature."

2. Any assessment of the outlook for the regime is hampered by our lack of hard evidence on the personalities and the locus of power within the NUC. Indeed, it seems likely that power relationships have in fact not been firmly established. General Gursel's position appears to be more that of first among equals than that of undisputed leader.

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Relatively little is known of Gursel himself, although he is not noted for intellectual brilliance. He is considered, however, to be a forceful man who had disapproved of Menderes' repressive policies well before the coup. There is evidence that Gursel, though certainly not anti-US, did consider his former superior (the deposed Chief of the General Staff, Erdelhun) as too much under Menderes' thumb and too subservient toward the US.

3. The regime continues to assert its intention to hold national elections and restore civil government. To do otherwise would run counter to one of the major reasons for staging the coup -- a desire for greater political freedom -- and would invite the strong disapproval of former President Inonu, head of the Republican People's Party (RPP). There is no evidence that the NUC as such has ambitions for lasting political control on the pattern of Nasser's Free Officers. Nevertheless, the objectives and attitudes of those in power may be subject to modification by the press of circumstances, their own experiences, and the interplay of personalities. For example, General Gursel and others might doff their uniforms and form a new political movement in a restored civil government.

4. Despite its apparently firm control of the country there have been a number of indications of a "sense of uneasiness" on

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the part of the regime. It has reduced Turkey's contingent in Korea from a brigade to a company on the ground that the brigade -- particularly the officers -- is needed in Turkey, and has decided to conduct a much wider purge of Menderes' Democrat Party than was originally intended. In addition, there are a number of indications of frictions within the regime. Twelve of the original 50 members of the NUC have resigned or been removed, although the reason for their departure is not known. There is fairly strong evidence of a difference of opinion in the NUC between those who favor the return to power of Inonu and the RPP, and those who favor a new and more nationalistic political movement, presumably under the NUC's aegis. It is also probable that some senior military officers resent the power and prominence of the relatively junior NUC. In addition, Turkish military attaches abroad have been ordered to report on the actions of their Ambassadors. While this might suggest a lack of self-confidence on the part of the regime, it is at least as likely to be a measure of routine precaution.

5. The importance -- or in some cases even the accuracy -- of such differences is difficult to evaluate. It would hardly be surprising if there were policy differences among NUC members, and a certain amount of nervousness and apprehension may be no more

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than is natural for an inexperienced military regime at this stage. In any case, some personality and policy disputes and maneuvering for position are likely to continue. On the present evidence, however, we do not believe that these disputes will become so serious -- at least during the next few months -- as to imperil the stability of the regime or cause it to abandon its goal of holding national elections and returning to civil government.

6. The outcome of a national election will depend to a large extent on the role played by the NUC. If it merely oversees the holding of free elections, the RPP probably will emerge victorious and take control of the government. With the Democrat Party discredited, such parties as the Freedom Party and the Peasant Party are likely to play a more significant role. In any case, the military do not want a single-party system and for this reason may themselves sponsor a new political movement. If the regime does this, it will be strongly tempted to assure the party's victory. While we believe that the odds are against the development of a military-sponsored party, the fact that the military have once intervened sets a precedent which will have a continuing influence on future civilian governments. In any case, members of the junta are likely to play a role of some importance in Turkish affairs in the future, either on their own or working through political parties.

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7. The provisional government has taken a number of steps to improve the government's financial position. It has appointed competent men to the key economic positions, and has begun to prune Menderes' overambitious development program. In addition, it has announced plans to relieve the stringency of its financial position by selling bonds to the public. It also appears that the Menderes' government did not leave the treasury quite as empty as the new regime originally claimed and therefore the regime is less apprehensive about its immediate financial problems than it was shortly after it assumed power. Nevertheless, its financial position does not appear strong and continued appeals for additional US aid are likely.

8. Neither the interim government nor the RPP are likely to alter the main outlines of Turkish foreign policy, although there are indications that both favor the adoption of a more independent stance in foreign affairs. While Inonu and the RPP inaugurated Turkey's policy of cooperation with the West, the RPP has been critical of Menderes for carrying this cooperation too far. Although the provisional government has stated it will honor all of Turkey's international commitments, there are indications that the US may lose the inside track the US has had in recent years.

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Unless the new regime adopts a much more nationalist policy than appears likely, however, the broad framework of Turkish cooperation with the West is likely to continue.

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FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

[Redacted Signature Box]

SHERMAN KENT  
Chairman

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